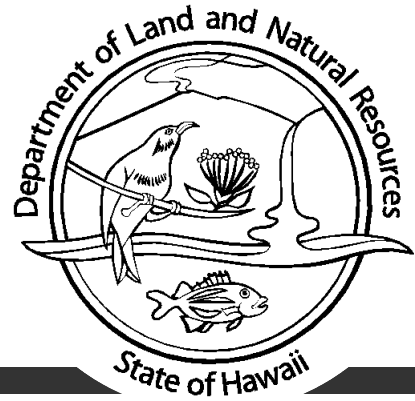


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NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Deborah Ward, 587-0320 (pgr. 363-0448)
February 2, 2000
00-11



DLNR ADDS HABITAT FORMS TO KUALOA ARTIFICIAL REEF

Department of Land and Natural Resources will add a barge load of concrete habitat forms to the Kualoa Artificial Reef on Thursday, February 3, pending favorable weather. The reef, located one mile off Ka'a'awa, O'ahu, is one of five in the State designed to provide new habitat for marine life.

A variety of fish species will benefit from the reefs including *weke*, *kumu* and *menpachi*. As coral, limu and other organisms grow on artificial reefs, the man-made habitats become able to sustain heavy fishing activity and help relieve fishing pressure on nearby natural reefs.

North Pacific Construction, Inc. will tow the barge with the modules to a designated site at the Kualoa Artificial Reef and deploy it in depths of 70 to 90 feet. There are about 460 forms in a barge load.

"In the past two months we added several barge loads of habitat forms made out of donated concrete to the Kualoa Reef, the first additions to the reef since 1994. These habitats give fish and other marine species new homes to live in, and also expand opportunities for Hawai'i's fishermen and divers," said DLNR Aquatic Resources Administrator William Devick. "Our goal is to increase reef fish populations on the windward coastline by providing additional habitat for them."

The Kualoa Artificial Reef was created in 1972 and is the largest established artificial reef site in Hawai'i.

For safety reasons, fishermen, boaters, and divers are asked to stay clear of the barge and the reef site. During the operations, the target area will be clearly marked with surface floats.

For more information on the Artificial Reef Program contact Brian Kanenaka at 587-0332.

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